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ABSTRACT

The Music Language Arts (MLA) Program, funded under Elementary Secondary Education Act Title I, was designed for high school students with inadequate English skills for participation in regular content area subjects. Students were selected from the population of English as a Second Language (ESL) students in the schools. Those for whom additional English language instruction through music was deemed most appropriate and whose school schedules permitted, were enrolled. The program operated in four high schools, serving approximately 299 students from grades 9-12. The development and improvement of English language arts, including reading, was the main objective of the program. Music, as a high interest area, was to be used as the vehicle for ESL instruction. It was to serve as the subject matter for instruction. Most frequently, lessons were planned around the vocabulary, concepts, and sentence structures involved in the lyrics of particular songs. Further language instruction was given based upon the teachers' perceptions of the students' needs. Based upon observations, interviews, and analysis of questionnaire responses, it was found that the program was effective in increasing student abilities. Test analyses based upon a one month period of effective operation did not reveal statistically significant results. As a pilot project, the Music Language Arts Program was judged an effective adjunct to other ESL instruction in increasing English language abilities and maintaining interest in school activities. (Author/AM)

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EVALUATION REPORT

Function No. 09-59619

ED138684

MUSIC LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM

SPRING, 1975

Prepared by

WENDY G. OXMAN

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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An evaluation of a New York City school district educational project funded under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (PL 89-10) performed for the Board of Education of the City of New York for the 1974-75 school year

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CHAPTER I: THE PROGRAM

The Music Language Arts (MLA) Program was designed for students enrolled in poverty area high schools whose English abilities were not adequate to permit success in regular content area subjects. Students were selected from the population of English as a Second Language (ESL) students in the schools; those for whom additional English language instruction through music was deemed most appropriate, and whose school schedules permitted, were enrolled. Assisting in the decision regarding enrollment were pretest scores on the Stanford Achievement Test and teacher judgments regarding the level of student competency in English and in the native tongue.

The Program as Planned: Staffing

The program was planned to operate in five high schools, serving approximately 80 students in each school, for a total of 400. One teacher and one paraprofessional were to be assigned to each school; a coordinator and a secretary were also assigned to the program staff. Classes were to be limited to 15-20 students.

The Program as Planned: Activities

The development and improvement of English language arts, including reading, was the main objective of the program. Music, as a high interest area, was to be used as the vehicle for ESL instruction, and, in its own right, serve as the content of subject matter instruction. Students were also to be assisted in

their adjustment to their new linguistic and cultural environment. The structure, vocabulary, and idioms of the English language were to be taught through learning classical, popular, folk, and commercial songs in English, relating English words and concepts to those in other languages, and reinforcing the students' newly acquired knowledge of English through listening, speaking, reading, and writing, within the context of music instruction. A culminating experience was also planned. In addition to classroom instruction, teachers were to assist in developing materials and in training their paraprofessional assistants.

The program coordinator was to organize, administer and supervise the program, under the auspices and direction of the Division of High Schools and the guidance of the Directors of Bilingual Education and of Music. Teacher training, coordination with the Native Language Arts (NLA/ESL) program and the conduct of workshops were to be among the coordinator's responsibilities.

The Program as Implemented

Of the five schools in which the program was to operate, only four were able to participate, because of scheduling difficulties. The coordinator began work on February 1,1975,teachers and paraprofessionals were hired starting February 13, 1975, and classes were under way by February 20, 1975. The program was fully operational, in terms of full staffing and class activities, by March 10, 1975. Thus, the program's length of operation was approximately five months from its inception, and four months from its date of full operation.

CHAPTER II: EVALUATIVE PROCEDURES

The evaluation objective, as stated in the evaluation design prepared by the Office of Educational Evaluation, Board of Education of the City of New York, was to assess the extent to which participants in the Music Language Arts Program made statistically significant improvement in auditory comprehension skills beyond a comparison group in the Native Language Arts (NLA/ESL) Program (B/E #09-59614). The Stanford Achievement Test (Auditory) Primary 2 was to be administered on a pretest-posttest basis to all participants. For the ninth graders, and for students in the upper grades, an analysis of covariance was to be run, comparing Music Language Arts students with NLA/ESL students, adjusting posttest scores for the effects of differences between pretest scores. Testing and analysis were conducted as planned.

Testing was conducted by the school staffs in September, 1974 and in April, 1975, and data furnished to the evaluator for analysis. Table 1 presents the number of participants, and the number and percentage of participants for whom complete test data were available.

Table 1

Number of Participants, and Participants Tested

	Participants	Participants Tested	
	N	N	Per Cent
Grade 9	155	119	76.8
Grades 10-12	144	93	64.6

Of the ninth grade participants (N=155), 76.8 per cent had taken both pre- and posttests; of the upper grade students (N=144), complete test data were available for 64.6 per cent of the group. Test scores were unavailable for a variety of reasons. Absence during pre- or posttesting, discharge before completing the program, and recent admission were the most common listed reasons for missing data. It should be noted that pretest scores were obtained in September, as part of the overall NLA/ESL testing, or at the time the student enrolled. Posttests were given in April, only one month after the program began full operation. Many participants entered the program between March and the end of the school year.

In addition to data collection through analysis of test data, the evaluator made two visits to each of the four program sites, attended a staff workshop and the culminating performance given at Board of Education headquarters. During each site visit, class sessions were observed, and teachers, supervisors, and coordinators were interviewed, and materials examined. The evaluator and program coordinator conferred frequently during the course of the program, and the evaluator made a presentation at the teacher workshop. In addition, questionnaire responses were obtained from program and school staff members, and analyzed.

CHAPTER III: FINDINGS

In this section, the results of test data, and information derived from observation, interviews, and analysis of questionnaire responses are presented.

Analysis of Test Data

As planned, analysis of Stanford Achievement Test (Auditory) data were analyzed using analysis of covariance. The test scores of participants were compared with those of all students in the NLA/ESL program within the same schools whose schedules did not permit participation, or who were in need of additional native language instruction at that time. The results of the analysis of covariance for ninth grade is presented in Table 2, and for grades 10-12 in Table 3.

Table 2

Analysis of Covariance: Music Language Arts (MLA) vs. Comparison Group (NLA/ESL) on Posttest Scores, with Pretest as Covariate, Grade 9

Mean Scores: Grade 9		
Stanford Achievement Test (Auditory)	MLA	NLA/ESL
Pretest	1.19	1.61
Posttest	1.43	1.88
Adjusted Posttest	1.52	1.63

Analysis of Covariance Table			
Source	df	Mean Square (Adjusted Posttest)	F
Between Groups (MLA vs. NLA/ESL)	1	.33	1.07
Within Groups	155	.31	

Table 3

Analysis of Covariance: Music Language Arts (MLA) vs. Comparison Group (NLA/ESL) on Posttest Scores, with Pretest as Covariate, Grades 10-12

Mean Scores: Grades 10-12		
Stanford Achievement Test (Auditory)	MLA	NLA/ESL
Pretest	1.45	1.59
Posttest	1.92	2.02
Adjusted Posttest	1.99	1.99

Analysis of Covariance Table			
Source	df	Mean Square (Adjusted Posstest)	F
Between Groups (MLA vs. NLA/ESL)	1	> .01	> .01
Within Groups	323	.43	

The analyses of covariance performed revealed no significant differences between the adjusted mean posttest scores of the Music Language Arts students and those of their schoolmates who were not enrolled in the program. No significant differences were found in either ninth grade or the upper grades.

Description of the On-going Program

The evaluation revealed that the program was implemented, in general, according to the specifications of the program proposal, except that one school did not participate. In each of the four participating schools, the Music Language Arts teacher prepared lessons and gave instruction in English through the medium of music, designing much of his or her own materials under the supervision of, and with the assistance of the MLA coordinator and the music, ESL, and/or foreign language

chairman or coordinator within the school. A total of 299 students participated; all were members of the target population for which the program was designed; they were virtually all non-English speaking new students from other countries and from Puerto Rico. They spoke a number of languages; Spanish and French were the most common, but other languages included Hungarian, Portuguese, and a variety of Oriental languages.

Although it had been hoped that bilingual music teachers could be recruited for this program, such personnel were not available. Teachers were music teachers by training; they were to learn ESL techniques while participating in the program. Two of the teachers, in particular, were especially conscientious in this regard; moveover, teachers learned and used many foreign language words in their instructional programs.

The coordinator, who was of foreign language background, was trained in music education and in English as a Second Language instruction. She was conscientious in her work with the teachers and in her preparation and distribution of curriculum materials. Her perceptions of the teachers' and students' needs seemed insightful, and it appeared that she did everything that was possible to facilitate the effectiveness of the program.

The classroom observations revealed that most of the teachers were planning each of their lessons around the vocabulary and concepts involved in the lyrics of a particular song. In two cases, objects had been brought in by the teachers to illustrate these concepts. Song lyrics were distributed on rexographed sheets or written on the chalkboard for copying by the students. Teachers explained the meanings of the song lyrics, line by line, and used the ideas inherent in them as a takeoff for further

ESL instruction. In some cases, this was done more successfully than in others; in general, instructional techniques improved markedly between the first and second rounds of observational visits. At first, teachers tended to extend their lessons in many different directions, focussing on whatever aspect of language seemed to come to mind at a particular time. One teacher, however, had worked out a systematic method of building knowledge of vocabulary and sentence structure into her lessons, asking a series of questions which the students had to answer, first with sentences drawn directly from the lyrics, and then with variations of these sentences. Another teacher built a lesson around verb structures, using the song "Getting to Know You," which has a substantial number of verbs within its lyrics, as a takeoff point. During one observation, students were introduced to a traditional American square dance; the teacher taught related vocabulary, some relevant history of this dance form, and related folk dancing to the students' experience in other countries.

In most classes observed, all language modes were in use--listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students were assigned homework, and took tests. Attendance was taken; it ranged from seven to 16 students during the sessions observed.

In addition to language instruction, students learned some music theory (the treble and bass clefs; the eight notes of the scale), and in some schools, learned to play the flutophone. In one school, the students were so enthusiastic that they learned to play and sing "My Country 'Tis of Thee" in two part harmony during a single observed session.

It must be remembered that the development of materials and techniques by the teachers was to occur as part of the program's implementation, and it would be expected, in a creative effort such as this, that some of the results be more successful than others. There is no question, however, that the students enjoyed the classes, were attentive to both its musical and its ESL aspects, with few exceptions, and in only one school did discipline seem to be problematic. Moreover, the students had increased their use of English observably between the first and second rounds of observation, from participating in rote and drill work to a point where they were using it to express themselves and to ask questions in class.

The educational assistants played varying roles in the program; they gave willing, but minimal assistance. In one school, the attendance of the educational assistant was erratic and the individual was finally dismissed; in another the educational assistant's help did not seem effective in either instructional or disciplinary efforts.

With one exception, the rooms assigned for use in the program were adequate, and in two schools, seemed exceptionally pleasant.

The evaluator attended and spoke at one of the workshops for staff members, and their associates at the several schools, that were held at the Central Board headquarters. A music teacher from one of the schools who had been working with ESL students for many years, and has been very helpful to the program teacher in her school, presented some of her techniques. Another speaker was a representative of the radio station WNYE, who discussed the use of radio, radio tapes, and cassettes, which are available at no cost, within the classroom. At the same meeting, an extensive

general curriculum guide was distributed to the teachers for their use. Teachers themselves spoke about their progress, and shared ideas for lessons and materials.

Materials observed in use in the program were mainly teacher-made, with the exception of the flutophone and the phonograph records. One record had been designed for ESL instruction through music; unfortunately, it had been produced in England, and the variation in the language made its use somewhat inappropriate.

The culminating activity of the program was a performance put on by the teachers and students at the Central Board headquarters. The students and their teachers from each of the four schools sang, danced, and spoke enthusiastically and effectively to a highly receptive and equally enthusiastic audience of parents and school personnel.

Discrepancy Analysis

The program was implemented essentially as planned, except that one of the schools was unable to participate. Students served by the program were indeed in need of ESL instruction and well motivated to achieve within the context of music learning. A total of 299 students participated; this total approximated the 320 for whom the program in the four schools was planned.

Analysis of Questionnaire Responses

Questionnaires were distributed to 15 persons in the schools who were teachers, paraprofessionals, or supervisors involved with the program, to gain additional information regarding their perceptions of the program functioning within the schools. A total of eight responses were received, six from supervisors, and one

each from a teacher and paraprofessional. Respondents were asked to rate the quality of various aspects of the program and its effects, and to answer a series of questions regarding the program.

Table 4 presents the distribution of the ratings assigned by respondents. In one school, differing sets of ratings were provided for some items; the program was conducted in the school's main building and in its annex. Where two ratings were provided, both have been included in the tabular analysis presented.

Table 4

Ratings of Aspects of Program, by School and Program Personnel

Aspect of Program	No. of Responses	Excellent N	Excellent %	Very Good N	Very Good %	Fair N	Fair %	Poor N	Poor %
Suitability of physical facilities	10	1	10.0	5	50.0	1	10.0	3	30.0
Suitability of materials and equipment	9	2	22.2	3	33.3	3	33.3	1	11.1
Adequacy of preparation and guidance provided for project staff	8			3	37.5	4	50.0	1	12.5
Adequacy of preparation and guidance provided for school staff	7			3	42.9	3	42.9	1	14.3
Positive effect on student ability to speak English	9	1	11.1	5	55.6	3	33.3		
Positive effect on student ability to function in class and in school activities using ESL	8	3	37.5	2	25.0	3	37.5		
Positive effect on music achievement	8	2	25.0	5	62.5	1	12.5		
Positive effect on general academic achievement	7	1	14.3	5	71.4	1	14.3		
Positive effect on attendance	8	2	25.0	6	75.0				
Positive effect on attitudes toward education	8	2	25.0	5	62.5	1	25.0		

For the most part, respondents perceived the program as having a positive effect; the adequacy of the preparation and guidance provided for project and school staff was rated somewhat less favorably. It appeared, from the later comments of these respondents, that they were unaware of the curriculum development aspect of the program.

The respondents' answers to questions posed are summarized below.

1. What do you see as the strengths of the program?

The students' interest in and learning of music, the small class settings, the reinforcement of English learned in other ESL classes, the opportunity to integrate a variety of subject areas using music as the catalyst, and the students' improved attitude toward school were all noted as program strengths.

2. What do you see as the weaknesses of the program?

Respondents cited the lack of time prior to program implementation for adequate planning, curriculum development, teacher training, and obtaining of materials as program weaknesses. Lack of communication between different departments within some schools was also noted.

3. What differences have you noted between the way the program was planned and the way it actually works?

Two respondents reported that they did not know how the program was planned, and complained that the planning had to be conducted within the school. Others noted the success of this very within-school planning and experimentation.

4. What special problems have you encountered in the program?

Lack of available materials at the program's onset, lack of teacher preparation in ESL techniques, lack of curriculum materials, heterogeneity of student English abilities were cited as special problems. Conflicts between Puerto Rican and Haitian students were noted as a problem by one respondent, who saw the music program as particularly effective in helping to overcome this difficulty.

5. What suggestions do you have for changes in the program?

Most suggestions made were offered in the spirit of correcting previously noted weaknesses and problems. Respondents suggested that a detailed, specific course of study be prepared, with planned activities and materials. Teacher preparation in ESL techniques was also recommended.

Respondents all recommended that the program be continued, and noted that the problems encountered could be ironed out with additional time.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon observations, interviews, and analysis of questionnaire responses, it was found that the program was designed to meet the needs of the students for English as a Second Language instruction within the context of a high interest curriculum, was meeting these needs with some degree of effectiveness and, based on observation, appears to have potential for special success in the future.

In this program, the non-English speaking participants were given lessons in English through the medium of music. Most frequently, lessons were planned around the vocabulary, concepts, and sentence structures involved in the lyrics of particular songs. Further language instruction was given based upon the teachers' perceptions of the students' needs, using the song lyrics as the starting point. All language modes were in use. Students were assigned homework and took tests. Many also learned some music theory and learned to play an instrument. Facilities and materials in use were, for the most part, appropriate. Motivation among the students was high, and disciplinary problems minimal. School personnel involved with the program perceived it as effective, and recommended its continuation.

Therefore, it was concluded, from descriptive data, that the program is an effective means of increasing student abilities, despite the lack of statistically significant results of the test analyses, which were based upon a one month period of effective operation. As a pilot project, the Music Language Arts Program is seen as an effective adjunct to other ESL instruction in increasing English language abilities and maintaining interest in school activities.

Recommendations

The program should be recycled, given the opportunity to operate for a full school year, and expanded to serve the needs of students in a larger number of schools.

Additional work in curriculum development should be undertaken. The curriculum guide, the experiences of the current teachers as reflected in their logs, and the knowledge of those familiar with the program and of experts from the music and ESL fields should serve as the basis for the development of units and sequences of lesson plans, prepared in advance for implementation by the teachers. Perhaps extra sources of funding might be located for this purpose.

Social studies, particularly American culture, should be built into the program more explicitly. Students can and should learn American patriotic and historical songs, including, for instance, the Star Spangled Banner, as part of the program. They would thus be helped not only with language, but with cultural assimilation and participation.

Teachers should be sought who have ESL training, if possible, or given more intensive training as part of the program.

In each school, the teacher should be given assistance by both the music and foreign language or ESL coordinators or chairmen. A balance should be sought between the music and ESL aspects of the program. Responsibilities of the various participants should be clarified, and the program should be considered a joint venture.

Efficiency in instructional techniques should be sought. The students need to acquire a great deal of English language experience within a brief time. They are not young children, and the extent of their conceptual development should not be underestimated. Time should not be wasted on the development of simple concepts when all that is needed is the English label for ideas and objects with which they are already familiar. Small group techniques might also be developed and utilized, with structured and efficiently routinized activities for language practice. Techniques should be worked out for the efficient use of the educational assistants.

The use of student assistants, or peer volunteers, should be considered. This program seems particularly appropriate for the involvement of musically inclined former ESL students.

Care should be taken to distinguish between colloquial or poetic phrases (He's got the whole world in his hands...; My country, 'tis of thee) and the standard or more commonly used phrases. Students can and should learn both expressions.

Students should be given practice in, and encouraged to ask questions. Lessons frequently involved the "teacher question-pupil response" pattern, and yet there were many instances observed of student confusion and frustration with their inability to phrase a question. Pupil-pupil interaction during language drill might be effective in this regard.

Students might also be given the opportunity to select some of the songs to learn, within previously specified criteria.

Use Table 30B for Treatment/Control Designs

30B. Standardized Test Results

In the table below, enter the requested information about the tests used to evaluate the effectiveness of major project component/activities in achieving desired objectives. If there was random assignment and only one testing period, report the mean scores (preferably in grade equivalents in the column "posttest." Before completing this table, read all footnotes. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

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Component Code	Activity Code	Test Used 1/	Form		Level		Total N 2/	3/	Group 4/ I.D.	Number Tested		Pretest			Adj Posttest			Statistical Data			
			Pre	Post	Pre	Post				N	Score Type 5/	Date	Mean 6/	S.D. 7/	Date	Mean 6/	S.D. 7/	8/ df	9/ Test	10/ Value	11/ Level
614151	720	SAT 73	A	B	II	II	155	T	9	119	1	9/74	1.2	.25	4/75	1.5	.55	1/	F	1.07	n.s.
								C	9	39	1	9/74	1.6	.25	4/75	1.6	.55	155			
614161	720	SAT 73	A	B	II	II	144	T	16	93	1	9/74	1.5	.47	4/75	2.0	.66	1/	F	>.01	n.s.
								C	16	233	1	9/74	1.6	.47	4/75	2.0	.66	323			
								T													
								C													
								T													
								C													
								T													
								C													

1/Identify the test used and year of publication (MAT-58;CAT-70,etc).
2/Total number of participants in the activity.
3/T=Treatment group; C=Control group. (a control group consists of students selected at the same time that the treatment participants were selected and who essentially have the same characteristics as the treatment group. The control group does not take part in the compensatory activity, whereas the treatment group does.)
4/Identify the participants by specific grade level (e.g., grade 3, grade 5). Where several grades are combined, enter the last two digits of the component code.
5/1=grade equivalent; 2=percentile rank; 3=Z score; 4=publisher's standard score; 5=stanine; 6=raw score; 7=other.
6/Report mean grade equivalents unless unavailable from publisher's norms.
7/Standard deviation (estimated from MS_W)
8/Degrees of freedom (Within/Between)
9/Test statistic (e.g. t; F; X^2 etc.)
10/Obtained value
11/Specify level of statistical significance obtained (e.g. $p \leq .05$; $p \leq .01$)

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OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION - DATA LOSS FORM

(attach to MIR, item #30) Function # 09-59619

In this table enter all Data Loss information. Between MIR, item #30 and this form, all participants in each activity must be accounted for. The component and activity codes used in completion of item #30 should be used here so that the two tables match. See definitions below table for further instructions.

Component Code	Activity Code	(1) Group I.D.	(2) Test Used	(3) Total N	(4) Number Tested/ Analyzed	(5) Participants Not Tested/ Analyzed		(6) Reasons why students were not tested, or if tested, were not analyzed	
						N	%		Number/ Reason
61545	720	9	SAT 73	155	119	36	23.2	Absent - pretest	3
								Absent - posttest	16
								Discharged	1
								Recent admission	5
								No score available	11

(1) Identify the participants by specific grade level (e.g., grade 3, grade 9). Where several grades are combined, enter the last two digits of the component code.
(2) Identify the test used and year of publication (MAT-70, SDAT-74, etc.).
(3) Number of participants in the activity.
(4) Number of participants included in the pre and posttest calculations found on item#30.
(5) Number and percent of participants not tested and/or not analyzed on item#30.
(6) Specify all reasons why students were not tested and/or analyzed. For each reason specified, provide a separate number count. If any further documentation is available, please attach to this form. If further space is needed to specify and explain data loss, attach additional pages to this form.

OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION - DATA LOSS FORM

(attach to MIR, item #30) Function # 09-59619

In this table enter all Data Loss information. Between MIR, item #30 and this form, all participants in each activity must be accounted for. The component and activity codes used in completion of item #30 should be used here so that the two tables match. See definitions below table for further instructions.

Component Code	Activity Code	(1) Group I.D.	(2) Test Used	(3) Total N	(4) Number Tested/ Analyzed	(5) Participants Not Tested/ Analyzed		(6) Reasons why students were not tested, or if tested, were not analyzed	
						N	%		Number/ Reason
6 1 4 1 6	7 2 0	16	SAT 73	144	93	51	35.4	Absent - posttest	13
								Discharged	3
								Recent admission	14
								No scores available	21

(1) Identify the participants by specific grade level (e.g., grade 3, grade 9). Where several grades are combined, enter the last two digits of the component code.

(2) Identify the test used and year of publication (MAT-70, SDAT-74, etc.).

(3) Number of participants in the activity.

(4) Number of participants included in the pre and posttest calculations found on item #30.

(5) Number and percent of participants not tested and/or not analyzed on item #30.

(6) Specify all reasons why students were not tested and/or analyzed. For each reason specified, provide a separate number count. If any further documentation is available, please attach to this form. If further space is needed to specify and explain data loss, attach additional pages to this form.

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3/75